

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEA-10 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13
ARA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 EB-08
COME-00 AGRE-00 /106 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5657

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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E.O.11652; N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GW, UG

SUBJECT: AMIN CELEBRATES SIX YEARS IN POWER

THE FONOFF HAS PASSED US THE FOLLOWING REPORT FROM THE
FRG EMBASSY IN UGANDA. EMBASSY TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT:

SUBJECT: CELEBRATIONS OF SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF AMIN'S
TAKEOVER OF GOVERNMENT

1. THE CELEBRATIONS OF THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ASSUMPTION OF POWER BY THE MILITARY (AMIN'S ACCESSION
TO GOVERNMENT) ENDED ON JANUARY 27. THEY CULMINATED
IN A STATE RECEPTION AND PARADE ON JANUARY 28. SEVERAL
OF THE TEN OFFICIAL EVENTS TOOK PLACE IN THE
PROVINCES. CEREMONIAL FOUNDATION-STONES WERE LAID,
PRIMARILY INVOLVING PROJECTS FINANCED WITH ARAB MONEY.
IRAQ, SYRIA, MOROCCO, LIBYA, SOMALIA, CUBA AND
LIBERIA SENT OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT DELEGATIONS, AND THE
PLO WAS REPRESENTED BY COLONEL AHMAD (THE DEPUTY
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COMMANDER OF THE PLO FORCES). AHMAD GAVE A RATHER
MODERATE SPEECH AT THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION-STONE
OF A PHARMACEUTICAL PLANT IN KAMPALA, 49 PERCENT OF
WHICH IS FINANCED BY THE PLO THROUGH THE UNITED ARAB
FUND. A RATHER LARGE CUBAN DELEGATION WAS HEADED BY
GENERAL CABRERA WHO WAS WELCOMED BY AMIN WITH REMARK-
ABLE CORDIALITY AND AMIN RE-NAMED A STREET IN BOMBO 'CUBA

ROAD.' IT WAS NOTED THAT BLACK AFRICA WAS REPRESENTED MERELY BY A DELEGATION FROM LIBERIA WHILE SEVERAL ARAB DELEGATIONS WERE HEADED BY CABINET MINISTERS.

A SOMEWHAT MACABRE IMPRESSION WAS GIVEN BY BAGPIPERS FLOWN IN FROM SCOTLAND (PROBABLY AGAINST REMUNERATION) WHO WERE ALWAYS IN APPEARANCE AND WERE DESCRIBED BY AMIN AS ARISTOCRATIC DECENDENTS OF THE LAST SCOTTISH KING. HIS INTENTION OBVIOUSLY WAS TO STRESS HIS STILL EXISTING PARTIALITY FOR GREAT BRITAIN, BUT THE EFFECT OF THIS SHOW WAS RATHER OPERETTA-STYLE. MENTION SHOULD BE MADE OF THE FACT THAT, IN CONTRAST TO LAST YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS, THERE WAS NO MILITARY PARADE, A FACT WHICH THE SOVIETS NOTED WITH SOME DISPLEASURE.

2. AMIN'S MESSAGE TO THE NATION CONTAINED NOTHING SPECIAL. HIS MILITANT TONE VIS-A-VIS SOUTHERN AFRICA AND ISRAEL HAS BEEN CUSTOMARY FOR A LONG TIME AND, THEREFORE, DID NOT COME AS A SURPRISE. THE ONLY FORM OF ADDRESS HE HAD FOR THE ISRAELIS WAS 'INTERNATIONAL BANDITS', HE REJECTED NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE 'RACISTS' IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND URGED 'LIBERATION BY WAR.'

3. WHAT DID COME AS A SURPRISE TO EVERYBODY WAS THE APPOINTMENT OF DEFENSE MINISTER AND CHIEF OF STAFF MUSTAFA AS VICE PRESIDENT. MUSTAFA HAD BEEN IN DISGRACE UNTIL A SHORT WHILE AGO BUT, NONETHELESS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MANAGED TO KEEP HIS JOB. THE SIMULTANEOUS APPOINTMENT OF COLONEL IBRAHIM, COMMANDER OF THE NOW-NOTORIOUS 'MARINES', AS MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO AND OF MAJOR GENERAL LUMAGO AS MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE CLEARLY INDICATES A SHIFT IN FAVOR OF THE MILITARY WHO THUS GAINED A MAJORITY IN THE CABINET. THESE APPOINTMENTS DO NOT BODE WELL AS THE NOT VERY GIFTED VICE PRESIDENT WAS CHARGED WITH DIRECTING THE CABINET AND COLONEL IBRAHIM HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING RECKLESS AND BRUTAL. BOTH ARE MOSLEMS AND FROM THE NORTH. LUMAGO IS A CHRISTIAN AND A RATHER RESERVED PERSON.

THE REORGANIZATION OF THE STATE LEADERSHIP MUST BE SEEN AS A CONCESSION BY AMIN TO THE ARMY WHICH HAS SHOWN SIGNS OF DISAPPOINTMENT AND DISPLEASURE AFTER THE ENTEBBE COUP. SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS, TOO, PROBABLY PLAYED A ROLE IN THIS CONTEXT. AS NEVER BEFORE AMIN WAS CONTINUOUSLY SURROUNDED BY HEAVILY ARMED MARINES.

IT IS CONSIDERED POSSIBLE THAT AMIN WANTS TO WITHDRAW

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FROM THE EVERYDAY BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT AND HAVE THE
VICE PRESIDENT INCREASINGLY ACT FOR HIM IN AN OFFICIAL
CAPACITY. THE COUNTRY WOULD MOST CERTAINLY PROFIT FROM
THIS ARRANGEMENT.

4. AMIN'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT UGANDAN COFFEE WILL
HENCEFORTH BE SOLD IN KAMPALA CAME AS AN EQUALLY BIG
SURPRISE. IN THE FUTURE, PROSPECTIVE BUYERS WILL HAVE
TO COME TO KAMPALA AND ARRANGE TRANSPORT OF THE COFFEE
THEY BUY FOR THEMSELVES. AMIN CLAIMED THAT TWO MILLION
SACKS OF COFFEE WERE STORED IN UGANDA AND COULD NOT
BE SOLD BECAUSE OF TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES. (THIS
FIGURE IS CERTAINLY EXAGGERATED AND WAS NOT REPEATED
BY THE PRESS ON THE FOLLOWING DAY. IT IS A FACT,
THOUGH, THAT CONSIDERABLE QUANTITIES OF COFFEE HAVE
BEEN IN STORE FOR MONTHS AND CANNOT BE SOLD BECAUSE OF
TRANSPORTATION DIFFICULTIES.) EVEN CABINET MINISTERS,
WHO WERE JUST AS SURPRISED BY AMIN'S ANNOUNCEMENT AS
OTHER PEOPLE PRESENT, ACCEPTED IT WITH GREAT
SKEPTICISM AND CONCERN. COFFEE IS BY FAR THE MOST
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IMPORTANT FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNER OF UGANDA.

5. IN A PERSONAL CONVERSATION WITH ME THE FOREIGN MINISTER REGRETTED THE FACT THAT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC HAD NOT SENT AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION. THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC WAS THE ONLY WESTERN COUNTRY THAT HAD BEEN INVITED (BECAUSE OF THE SALT PROJECT). I REPLIED THAT THE INVITATION HAD BEEN EXTENDED TOO LATE TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO COMPLY WITH IT. (I LEARNED FROM COLLEAGUES THAT ALMOST ALL COMMUNIST COUNTRIES WERE INVITED TOO AND LIKewise REFRAINED FROM SENDING DELEGATIONS.) THE FOREIGN MINISTER CONFIRMED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN GREATLY IMPRESSED BY THE LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION-STONE FOR THE KATWE SALT PROJECT. HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC 'EVERYTHING WAS ALL RIGHT AGAIN.'

6. THE CELEBRATIONS WERE FILMED BY A BRITISH TV TEAM THAT HAD BEEN PERSONALLY INVITED BY AMIN. SOME OF ITS FILMS WERE SENT TO THE SECOND GERMAN TELEVISION NETWORK (ZDF). TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GERMAN "SPIEGEL" NEWS MAGAZINE ARRIVED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WEEK AND HAVE SINCE BEEN TRYING, THROUGH THE UGANDAN AMBASSADOR IN BONN, MISS OLOWO, WHO IS PRESENTLY STAYING IN KAMPALA, AND THROUGH OTHER MEANS, TO GET AN INTERVIEW WITH AMIN. THEY HAVE NOT CONTACTED THIS EMBASSY THUS FAR. THE WHOLE ATTITUDE OF THE SPIEGEL REPRESENTATIVES, ONE OF WHOM PRESUMABLY IS MR. KOGELFRANZ OF THE EDITORIAL STAFF IN HAMBURG, INDICATES THE POSSIBILITY THAT A CRITICAL ARTICLE WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE SPIEGEL POSSIBLY CRITICAL ALSO OF THIS EMBASSY . ELLERKMANN END TEXT
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